

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

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The Authors Guild, Inc., Associational Plaintiff, :
Betty Miles, Joseph Goulden, and Jim Bouton, :
individually and on behalf of all others similarly :
situated, :
:

Plaintiffs, :
:

v. :
:

Google Inc., :
:

Defendant. :
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:
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Case No. 05 CV 8136-DC

ATTACHMENT

C

**TO THE DECLARATION OF PAUL AIKEN IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS'
OPPOSITION TO DEFENDANT GOOGLE'S MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT**

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Thoughts on the intersection of search, media, technology, and more.

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A9, Amazon's much discussed skunk works search project goes live today, so I can finally write about it. I saw it last month (caveat: unbeknownst to me until recently, Amazon

targeted me as their conduit to break this news – I think they wanted it to move from the blogosphere out, as opposed the WSJ in) and had to keep the damn thing to myself, it was hard, and here's why: On first blush it's a very, very good service, and an intriguing move by Amazon. It raises a clear question: How will Google – and more broadly, the entire search-driven world – react?

My gut tells me the public face will be one of partnership: After all, A9 uses Google's search results and displays at least two paid AdWord listings per result (I've requested comment from Google, you can imagine I'm not the only one...). But I have to wonder: What business is Google in, after all? Is it still in the business of just search – as it was back when it was cutting search provisioning deals right and left, with Yahoo (already ended), AOL (arguable imperiled due to Gmail and other trends), Ask, and Amazon? Is it really still in the business of being an OEM to others, a strategy which allowed it to steal those portals' customers? Or...has it evolved, to a business where it owns a large customer base, one it must now position itself to defend?

It seems to me, Google's position in Amazon's A9 implementation is at best a step backwards. If A9 is as good as it seems to be, every customer that uses and/or switches to A9 becomes an A9 search customer, and, more likely than not, a deeper and far more loyal Amazon customer. (The service incorporates a personal search history and many other really neat tweaks, including a wicked good Toolbar.) In essence, Amazon seems to be making a play for Google's customers. Or it seems that way to me, anyway. Sure, Amazon isn't in the AdWords business. It's happy to outsource that to Google and focus on the entire US retail GDP instead...



Udi Manber, the head of A9 and one of the leading lights of the search community, is understandably evasive when asked about this subject. Google and Amazon have always been friends and partners (despite the fact that "Work at Google" is the top paid link when you search on his name on Google). But as I point out in the introduction to my [Business](#)

[2.0 interview](#), to be posted any moment now, one-time partners can quickly become serious competitors in the Search Find Obtain market. And judging from the look of it, A9 is a very direct statement from Amazon: We are now officially in the search business, so get used to it.

One could argue that A9 is a pure commerce play, not a search portal. After all, that's what the folks at Amazon insisted when they founded the company and located it in the heart of Google/YahooLand (ie, Palo Alto). But that argument is disingenuous. First off, take a look at the A9 interface. Where's the commerce? (Answer, it's there, but it's hidden, more on that later when I post on the service itself). And second, I'd argue that you can't really be in the commerce business without having at least a strategy for owning search. The reverse also holds true. It's two ends toward the middle, and by the way, that middle ground is getting damn crowded – AOL, Yahoo, MSN, eBay, IAC, Amazon, Google...

Of course anyone who's been in this game for a while will tell you that the internet industry is rife with cat and mouse games of cooperation turned to competition. Netscape's outsourced its early search traffic to Yahoo, thereby ensuring Yahoo's success. Yahoo paid the favor forward by outsourcing its search to Google, a practice it ended only last quarter. Microsoft built Overture, and crushed Looksmart. And AOL's advertising business is on the rise again, due in large part to a deal with Google, which just announced a [stunning new email service](#) that pretty much decapitates one of AOL's core differentiators (oh, Yahoo and MSN as well...).

What makes this particularly noteworthy is that A9 is built quite literally on top of Google. In short, Amazon has taken the best of Google, and made it, to my mind, a lot better. Sound familiar? Yup, it's what Google did to Yahoo, Yahoo to Netscape...you get the picture.

It all reminds me of a [quote in a recent AP story](#) from Google employee #1:

(The ongoing threat of competition) has helped keep Google from becoming complacent, said Craig Silverstein, the company's director of technology. "If someone should come along and do a better job than us, we know people will switch in a heartbeat."

Something tells me the hearts are beating a bit faster at Yahoo and Google HQs today. Will Google renew its deal with Amazon? Will Bezos and Schmidt put a good face on it and call this a partnership? I have no idea, but man, things are certainly getting interesting in this neck of the woods. More after I talk with folks and get a second order view of the landscape.

(I'll also have a much more complete posting on A9, including a tour of its features and a discussion of its strategic implications later tonight.)

PS- for a tour of what's cool in A9: [Click here](#).

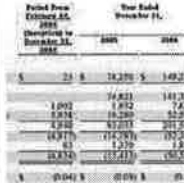
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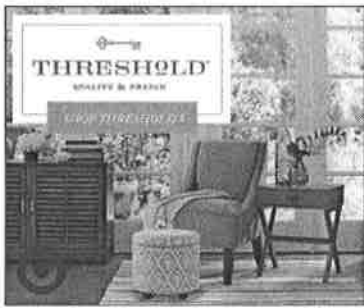
It can be a better solution for an end-user who is in touch with Amazon often in order to search for some product and get the results are mostly relevant to the products.

A9.com lacks some usability and accessibility features. Search results need to be organized well for better access, now it seems little congested content. Some of the features are not compatible with some other browser (Opera). Amazon needs to take these bugs seriously before end-users start going away.

Thanks!

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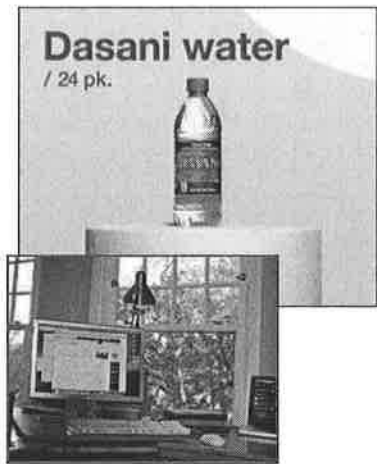
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